

# When Saying *My Bad*... is Good

Taking Accountability

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Let me start by saying...  
*My bad*

How many of you have ever felt  
like someone did something  
wrong to you?

How many of you ever did  
something wrong to someone  
else?

# Allow Me to Introduce Myself

Global Operations Project Manager at Meta

Working at Meta for 4 years

Previously worked at Salesforce, Boeing

B.A. from University of Washington, M.B.A from University of California, San Diego

Background in project / program management, strategy, operations, process improvement

Passionate about community engagement, solving problems, and collaborating with teams to deliver results



# Accountability

*“An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions”*

In Other Words...  
*My Bad*



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Acknowledge  
Own  
Apologize



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# Discussion

- How would you feel if you were the pitcher **immediately** once the (incorrect) call was made?
- What are your thoughts on the umpire's response to the situation after the game?
- What are your thoughts on the meeting between the umpire and pitcher the next day?

# Another Example of Accountability



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# Discussion

- How would you feel if you were a teammate of Kobe Bryant's when hearing the message?
- What are your thoughts on Kobe Bryant's approach to accountability?
- What do you think was the result of Kobe Bryant holding his teammates (and himself) accountable?

*Stretch Break*



# *Accountability in Project / Program Management*



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*Two Program Managers  
Walk into a Meeting Room*

## *Scenario: Two PgMs (Alex, Sam) are each in charge of their own project...and both missed a deadline*

Alex

- Dismisses the missed deadline; blames the team
  - “No big deal. The team didn’t get around to it in time.”

**What are your thoughts on Alex’s response?**

Sam

- Accepts responsibility for the missed deadline
  - “My bad. I should have built in contingencies to make sure we made the deadline. I’ll do better next time.”

**What are your thoughts on Sam’s response?**

*What if they really were wrong?*



# 84%

of the workforce describes itself as “trying but failing” or “avoiding” accountability, even when employees know what to fix.



# 80%

of people see accountability as punishing.



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# How *My Bad*...Can Be Good



# Potential Benefits to Saying “My Bad”

1. Swift acknowledgement
  - a. Quick way to own up to mistake and accept role in situation
2. Diffuses tension
  - a. Simple my bad can de-escalate high pressure circumstances
3. Displays humility
  - a. Demonstrates willingness to be accountable
4. Garners trust
  - a. Vulnerability amongst team members
5. Promotes engagement and empowerment
  - a. Only 13% of employees engaged at work



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*dare to lead*  
with BRENÉ BROWN

PODCAST

**“Exhibiting accountability  
over time is a gateway to  
trust. When we see  
someone acting with  
accountability, we gain  
the evidence we need  
to trust them.”**

**MIKE ERWIN & WILLYS DEVOLL**  
*Leadership Is a Relationship*



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# Things to Keep in Mind

1. Overuse
  - a. Can appear flippant, insincere
2. Downplaying Responsibility
  - a. Not taking mistake seriously
3. Missed Learning Opportunities
  - a. Can overshadow why error happened
4. Undermines Authority
  - a. Team may perceive leader with diminished competence



# Alternatives to “My Bad”

1. “I made a mistake here. Let me fix that.”
2. "That was an oversight on my part. Here's how I'll avoid this next time..."
3. "I take responsibility for that. What can I do to resolve it?"



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# WIIFM

*(What's In It For Me?)*



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# Key Takeaways

1. Own the Mistake Genuinely
2. Follow Up with Correction
3. Learn and Improve (and Share)
4. Moderation is Key



Thank You



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